

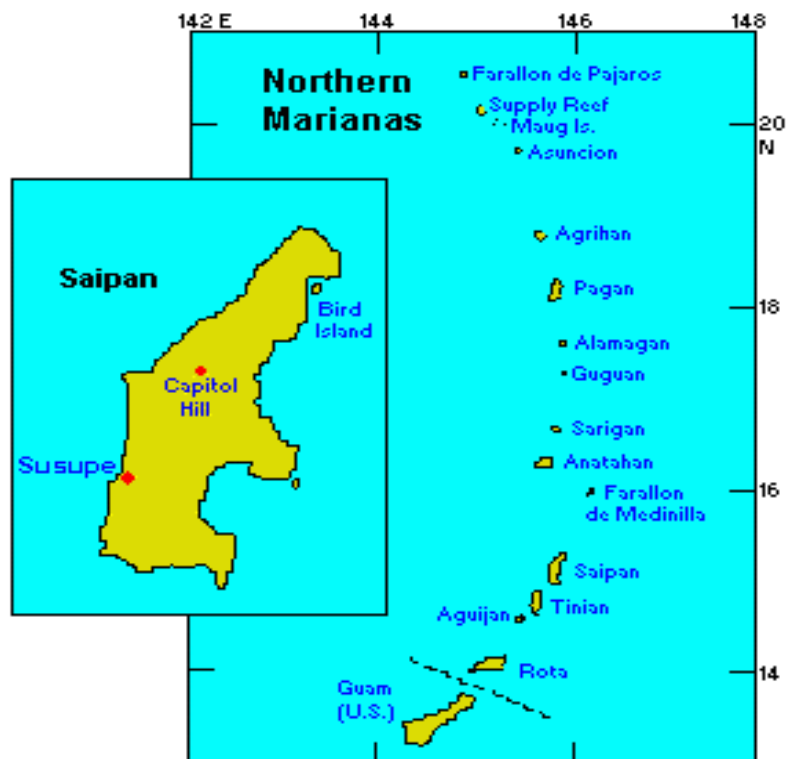
Office of National Drug Control Policy

Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

Northern Mariana Islands

Profile of Drug Indicators

September 2001



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

Northern Mariana Islands

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

Demographics¹

- Population: 71,912 (July 2000 est.)
- Age/Gender: *0-14 years*: 24% (male 8,652; female 8,377); *15-64 years*: 75% (male 25,441; female 28,233); *65 years and over*: 1% (male 591; female 618) (2000 est.)
- Ethnic groups: Chamorro, Carolinians and other Micronesians, Caucasian, Japanese, Chinese, Korean
- Unemployment Rate: 14% (residents)
- Economy: The economy benefits substantially from financial assistance from the US. The rate of funding has declined as locally generated government revenues have grown. A rapidly growing chief source of income is the tourist industry, which now employs about 50% of the work force (Japanese tourists predominate). The agricultural sector is of minor importance and is made up of cattle ranches and small farms producing coconuts, breadfruit, tomatoes, and melons. Garment production is the fastest growing industry, with employment of 12,000 (predominantly Chinese workers) and shipments of \$1 billion to the US in 1998 under duty and quota exemptions.
- Geography: The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) is located in an area called Oceania, with islands in the North Pacific Ocean, about three-quarters of the way from Hawaii to the Philippines. Northern Mariana Islands has a total land area of 477 sq km.
 - This land is composed of 14 islands including; Saipan (Capital), Farallon de Parjaros, Maug, Asuncion, Agrigan/Agrihan, Pagan, Alamagan, Guguan, Sariguan, Anatahan, Farallon de Medeirilla, Tinian, Aguijuan, and Rota.²

Politics³

- Northern Mariana Island is a commonwealth associated with the United States.
- CNMI Senate President: Senator Paul A. Manglona (*Republican/Rota* 12th CNMI Senate)
- CNMI House Representatives: Representative Maria "Malua" T. Peter and Representative Rosiky F. Camacho (CNMI 12th Legislature)⁴
- Governor: Governor Pedro P. Tenorio (since NA January 1998), and Lieutenant Governor Jesus R. Sablan (since NA January 1998)

Programs/Initiatives

- United States District Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, was established by an Act of Congress in 1977 and became operational in January, 1978. The court sits on the island of Saipan, but may sit other places within the Commonwealth. The District Court has the same jurisdiction as all other United States District Courts, including diversity jurisdiction and bankruptcy jurisdiction. Appeals are taken to the Ninth Circuit.⁵

- CNMI Criminal Justice Planning Agency (CJPA) is the State Administering Agency (SAA) for the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance formula grant program administered by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). The program has been the source of criminal justice systems improvement since 1987. In 1988, the program funded five (10) action programs; Law Enforcement, Court Diversion Program, Court Case Management Program, Information Systems and Technology Improvements, Availability of Program Information, Family Court Mediation Program, Community Crime Prevention Program, Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) Parent Program, Batterer's Program.⁶
- Support from BJA is used primarily to fund the Northern Marianas Drug Task Force, which is a collaborative effort of CNMI Customs, Department of Public Safety and Office of the Attorney General. In addition, the CJPA divides remaining grant funds among smaller programs and the development of a Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS).⁷

Crime and Drug-Related Crime⁸

- In 1997, there were 719 assault crimes in the Northern Mariana Islands, a decrease since 1996 (758 assault crimes).

Assault Crimes, Northern Mariana Islands, 1996 - 1997

Assault Crimes	1996	1997
TOTAL	758	719

- In 1997, there were 312 assault arrests in the Northern Mariana Islands.

Assault Arrests, by Age and Gender, Northern Mariana Islands, 1996 - 1997

Arrests Characteristics	1996	1997
Gender		
Male	297	272
Female	39	40
Age		
0-17	29	42
18-29	159	102
30-39	89	103
40-49	38	36
50 and Older	12	8
Not Mentioned	9	21
TOTAL	336	312

- In 1997, there were 936 total theft crimes in the Northern Mariana Islands.

Theft Crimes, by Force, Northern Mariana Islands, 1996 - 1997

Theft Crimes	1996	1997
With Force	449	249
Without Force	98	170
Others	373	517
TOTAL	920	936

- In 1997, there were 67 theft arrests in the Northern Mariana Islands.

Theft Crime Arrests, by Age and Gender, Northern Mariana Islands, 1996 - 1997

Arrests Characteristics	1996	1997
Gender		
Male	64	53
Female	20	14
Age		
0-17	15	16
18-29	38	33
30-39	21	5
40-49	7	7
50 and Older	1	2
Not Mentioned	2	4
TOTAL	84	67

Drug Use⁹

- **Methamphetamine**
Methamphetamine abuse poses the greatest illegal drug threat to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). Nearly all drug investigation in CNMI involve the distribution of crystal methamphetamine. More than 5 % of students (7 – 12th grade) have tried methamphetamine at least one. Of those sentenced for drug crimes and received sentences within the CNMI, 100% of defendants were specifically methamphetamine violations. Methamphetamine is not produced within the CNMI, but is smuggled in from Southeast Asia and the Philippines. The crystal form called “ice” is the most common and preferred form of the drug in this area.
- **Marijuana**
While marijuana is the most widely used illegal drug in the commonwealth, its cultivation and use do not pose the same problems to authorities as methamphetamine. Cannabis cultivation, which is usually small quantities for personal use, has reduced significantly in the past two years. Smuggling of marijuana from the Philippines or Belau is the primary source of cannabis within the CNMI.
- **Heroin**
Heroin use is limited within the CNMI. There is no recorded addiction among the resident population, however many tourists use the drug. Because of the location of

CNMI, many drug smugglers use the islands for transshipments of SEA heroin through the CNMI, often with destination of Canada.

- Cocaine
Cocaine use is very low, but the amount smuggler ships that enter into the country has increased, suggesting more widespread use.
- Other Dangerous Drugs
Although other dangerous drugs are a relatively small threat in the CNMI, in 1999, authorities recently became aware of MDMA and LSD use. Until then, inhalants posed a greater threat to the CNMI youth.

Drug Trafficking¹⁰

- The CNMI is a transit point for drugs, especially methamphetamine and heroin, smuggled from Asia to the U.S. West Coast. Officials acknowledge that almost all illicit drugs, including methamphetamine, cocaine, and heroin, are smuggled into the commonwealth. Cannabis continues to be grown locally in small quantities, but most marijuana is imported from neighboring countries. The CNMI is both a transshipment point and a final destination for marijuana. Drugs smuggled into the CNMI often arrive via commercial air passengers and air cargo. Individuals also use maritime vessels and the postal system to smuggle small quantities for personal use.

Sources

¹ Central Intelligence Agency, *World Fact Book 1998* Online at <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>

² The Northern Mariana Islands Web site: <http://www.mariana-islands.gov.mp/>

³ Central Intelligence Agency, *World Fact Book 1998* Online at <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>

⁴ Government of the CNMI (Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) Web site: <http://www.saipan.com/gov/>

⁵ United States District Court of the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands Web site: <http://www.nmid.uscourts.gov/>

⁶ Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center, Criminal Justice Planning Agency, *Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Enforcement Assistance Program, 2000 State Annual Report*.

⁷ Bureau of Justice Assistance, Territories Information Exchange Conference 2000, <http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/bja/184550.pdf>.

⁸ Criminal Justice Planning Agency, Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) Project : <http://www.cjpa.gov.mp/>

⁹ National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC), Northern Mariana Drug Threat Assessment

¹⁰ Ibid.

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